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CATALOGUE

OF A

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PRINTED UPON VELLUM,

AND OF

THE EXTREMELY FINE

MANUSCRIPT OF VIRGIL'S ÆNEID,

by WILLIAM MORRIS.

The Property of a Gentleman.

Day of Sale.

WEDNESDAY, THE 18TH OF JULY,

AT 2.30 P.M.

1928.

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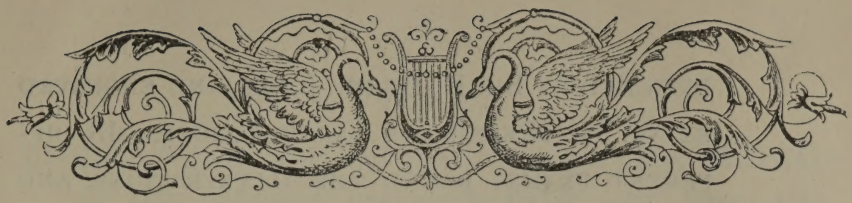

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Wednesday, July 18th, 1928,

AT 2.30 P.M.

LOT 1.

ELMSCOTT PRESS. CHAUCER (GEOFFREY) WORKS; EDITED BY F. S. ELLIS, PRINTED ON VELLUM (ONE OF 13 COPIES, SO PRINTED) IN BLACK AND RED, WOODCUT TITLE, AND 87 WOODCUT ILLUSTRATIONS

DESIGNED BY SIR E. BURNE-JONES, AND ENGRAVED BY W. H. HOOPER, 14 LARGE BORDERS, 18 DIFFERENT FRAMES ROUND THE ILLUSTRATIONS, AND 26 LARGE INITIAL WORDS DESIGNED FOR THE BOOK BY WILLIAM MORRIS, MANY OF THEM ENGRAVED BY C. E. KEATES, *crushed green morocco, double frame sides, decorated with interlaced knot-work' arabesques, and a conventional rose stamp, raised bands, gilt inside border*

folio. Kelmscott Press, W. Morris, 1896

*** A MAGNIFICENT COPY PRINTED ON VELLUM OF THE MOST FAMOUS MODERN PRINTED BOOK. Loosely inserted, a 4to sheet of Four Stanzas on Chaucer, Burne-Jones, and William Morris, headed "In librum aureum / trium poetarum opus," signed S. E. and dated, July / mdcccvcvi.

Lot 2.

MORRIS (WILLIAM) and Hewitt (Graily) THE AENEID OF VIRGIL, MANUSCRIPT ON VELLUM, 370 pp. folio (13⅝ *in. by* 8¾ *in.*), WITH DECORATIONS BY WILLIAM MORRIS and Mrs. Louise Powell, and large historiated miniatures after drawings by Burne-Jones by the late Charles Fairfax Murray, *white and purple vellum end-papers, brown morocco, blind-tooled in imitation of twelfth century bindings by Messrs. Leighton, brown morocco, pull-off case*

*** A MASTERPIECE OF MODERN CALLIGRAPHY AND A MANUSCRIPT OF THE GREATEST INTEREST. Some account of it is given by Miss May Morris in the introduction to vol. XI of the Collected Works of William Morris, 1921, pp. XXI-XXVI, and we are able to supplement what she says by information from the two survivors of the four who worked on the manuscript.

It was begun by Morris in the winter of 1874-5, and, with the exception of the first page of Books II-VI inclusive, was written to the foot of p. 177, almost at the end of Book VI : a half-page miniature of Venus and Aeneas, after a drawing by Burne-Jones, was painted on the opening page, and the text on the same page written, with the red "bole" ready for gilding, on a grey-purple ground "of strange and lovely quality," as Miss Morris says ; also twenty-two decorative initials of exquisite beauty were placed in the margins of various pages between 45 and 72 inclusive. Then, for some reason,

the work was abandoned, and the unfinished manuscript was subsequently sold to Fairfax Murray. For him the body of the manuscript was completed by Mr. Graily Hewitt, who also gilded the text on the opening page of Book I, wrote in letters of gold the opening pages of Books II-VI inclusive, and generally filled in the blue and gold initials in the text up to p. 72 inclusive; in addition he wrote the head-lines, "P. Virgilii Maronis," in blue on the dexter pages, "Aeneidos Liber [I-XII]" in gold on the sinister pages; nevertheless, a few of the initial letters—e. g. on pp. 46-7—are the work of William Morris, as well as the head-lines on the same two pages; all the initials after p. 72, and some of those before, are merely pencilled in. Murray then got Mrs. Louise Powell to draw fine borders of floral and foliate decoration, based on the Kelmscott Chaucer borders, to the opening pages of the twelve books [*see* FRONTISPIECE and Pl. IV]; the first of these was gilded by Mr. Hewitt, those to Books VII, VIII (*see* Pl. IV) and IX were coloured by Mrs. Powell, the rest are merely pencilled in. Finally, Murray himself painted half-page miniatures (some not quite finished) to the opening pages of all the Books except III (*see* Pl. IV), and painted five historiated miniatures (*see* Pl. III) in the margins of other pages, all from the designs by Burne-Jones which are now in the Fitzwilliam Museum. Long before this, as recorded by Miss May Morris, he had, at her father's request, almost entirely repainted the miniature of Venus and Aeneas (*see* FRONTISPIECE) so that only the head of Aeneas now remains of Morris's original work.

The manuscript then is composite—four hands have worked on it—and even so it is incomplete. None the less, it is of great beauty and importance: Miss Morris calls it "the noblest of all his [her father's] painted books . . . the writing is splendid and certain throughout—not a sign of fatigue or haste anywhere . . . The wonderful first page [*see* FRONTISPIECE] is simple enough in plan, but how superb!"

The miniature by Fairfax Murray, after Burne-Jones, reproduced on Pl. III, she calls "one of the most romantic of the 'storied' ornaments—tantalizing for its poetic charm and the regret felt over the unfinished state of the ornament as a whole (the picture is complete except for the gold)."

Of her father's floriated letters, two of which are shown on Pl. II, she says that

> "the arrangement and relation to the page, the quality of colour and the handling are quite the finest of his work. The painting is solid and luminous, the broadly-designed leafage, carefully modelled and finished, is at once strong and delicate, reminding one of the finest early French Gothic sculptured ornament. He made a beautiful and dexterous use of white in finishing and also played with the gold with evident enjoyment. Sometimes two colours were used—a pale silvery gold (the colour of a harvest moon) beside one of richer tone, or the gold itself glazed with thin red and painted with red veins."

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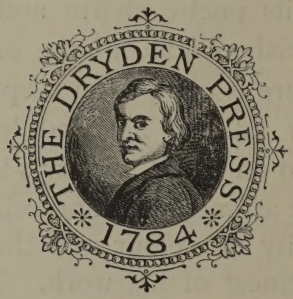

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and *Monthly* in the Burlington Magazine; Connoisseur; Apollo; and London Mercury.

B. Foreign.

Journal des Arts (Paris).
Gazette de l'Hotel Drouot (Paris).
Renaissance de l'Art Français.
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Chicago Daily News.
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